

Summary of Results from the 2004-2005 Somerville Health Survey

Grades 6-8

Submitted to:

The Somerville Public Schools
Somerville Cares About Prevention
The Cambridge Health Alliance

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	1
Report Format	1
Who Conducted the Survey?	1
How and When Was the Survey Conducted?	1
What Did the Survey Ask About?	1
Validity	2
Non-Respondents	2
Trends	2
Comparative Data	2
Who Has the Problem?	3
Who Is Responsible?	3
SUBSTANCE USE	4
Lifetime and Current Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005)	5
Lifetime Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Grade	6
Lifetime Substance Use for National 8th Grade Students (2004) and Somerville 8th Grade Students (2005)	7
Current Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Gender	8
Current Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Grade	9
Current Substance Use for National 8th Grade Students (2004) and Somerville 8th Grade Students (2005)	10
Current Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2003, 2005)	11
VIOLENCE AND SAFETY	12
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Experienced Physical Violence Issues in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)	13
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Experienced Sexual Violence Issues in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)	14
MENTAL HEALTH	15
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Reported Experiencing Potential Stressors in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)	16
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Reported Worrying About Problems in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)	17
Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation and Behavior in the Past 12 Months Among Somerville Middle School Students (2003, 2005)	18
PHYSICAL HEALTH	19
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Have Ever Had Sexual Intercourse, Total and by Grade (2003, 2005)	20
Perception of Body Weight Among Somerville Middle School Students, Total and by Gender (2005)	21
Current Weight Control Goal Among Somerville Middle School Students, Total and by Gender (2005)	22
Weight Loss Methods Used by Somerville Middle School Students in the Past 12 Months, Total and by Gender (2005)	23
APPENDIX A: Selected Data Tables	
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use	
Substance Use-Related Issues	
Violence and Safety	
Mental Health Issues	

BACKGROUND

REPORT FORMAT

In March of 2005, 1,036 Somerville middle school students (grades 6-8) took part in the 2004-2005 Somerville Middle School Health Survey. The survey was developed by the Somerville Public Schools, the Somerville Cares About Prevention Coalition, and the Cambridge Health Alliance. Based on surveys such as the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, *Monitoring the Future*, *Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors*, and the *Survey of Student Resources and Assets*, the questionnaire was designed to gather information on some of the important issues facing youth in Somerville, such as substance use, violence and safety, and mental health. A similar survey was conducted during the 2002-2003 school year, and a high school version of the survey was conducted in both 2001-2002 and 2003-2004.

This report is designed to provide an overview of key survey data, focusing on four main themes: (1) What do the data from this survey tell us about the challenges facing youth in Somerville?; (2) Are there any important sub-population differences among respondents (such as by gender or grade)?; (3) How have the data changed since the previous administration of the survey?; and (4) When possible, how do results in Somerville compare to those in other communities? The summary presents an overview of findings grouped according to the following themes: Substance Use; Violence and Safety; Mental Health; and, Physical Health. The main results in each section are illustrated using charts that are complemented by supplementary data or information. An appendix containing selected data follows the main results.

WHO CONDUCTED THE SURVEY?

The survey was conducted by the Somerville Public Schools, the Somerville Cares About Prevention Coalition, and the Cambridge Health Alliance in collaboration with Social Science Research and Evaluation, Inc. (SSRE), a non-profit social science research firm located in Burlington, Massachusetts.

HOW AND WHEN WAS THE SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The survey was administered as a questionnaire in March of 2005 to all Somerville public school students in grades 6 through 8. The number of respondents in each grade is as follows:

6 th	7 th	8 th	Unknown	TOTAL
355	325	353	3	1,036

School administrators set aside approximately 30 minutes for students to complete the survey. The attending classroom teacher was responsible for passing out the questionnaires and maintaining order in the classroom. In addition to English, the survey was translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian.

WHAT DID THE SURVEY ASK ABOUT?

The survey focuses on issues ranging from demographic and background items (e.g., gender, age), to student substance use (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, other drugs), to other issues related to

student health such as stress and suicide, violence and safety, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, and physical activity.

VALIDITY

There is a good deal of research about the ways in which students respond to surveys and whether they tell the truth. This work indicates that student survey results are reasonably accurate provided that student participation is voluntary and that the respondents cannot be identified. The Somerville Middle School Health Survey met these conditions. The voluntary nature of the survey was explained to both students and their parents. Prior to the survey, parents were given the opportunity to opt their child(ren) out of the survey. In addition, students could choose not to participate or to skip any items. The confidential nature of the survey was highlighted in the questionnaire instructions that asked students *not* to put their name on the questionnaire and explained that their answers would not be viewed by anyone who knows them.

Two other steps were taken to increase validity. First, each questionnaire was reviewed to identify any on which students obviously provided frivolous answers. Such questionnaires were omitted from all analyses. Second, analyses were conducted to test for the reasonableness of responses and for the consistency of responses across related items. When inconsistent responses were identified, the entire case or the suspect items for that case were treated as missing data in all subsequent analyses. These two procedures identified few problems.

The validity of the survey is also bolstered by using a questionnaire based largely upon existing instruments such as the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), *Monitoring the Future* (University of Michigan), and *Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors* and *Survey of Student Resources and Assets* (America's Promise and Search Institute). These standardized instruments have been thoroughly tested and administered in large-scale research studies (see Brener, N., Kann, L., McManus, T., Kinchen, S.A., Sundberg E.C., and Ross, J.G. [2002]. "Reliability of the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Questionnaire." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 31, 336-342).

NON-RESPONDENTS

It is important to keep in mind that the survey results can be generalized only to students who were present when the survey was administered. The results may not reflect responses that might have been obtained from students who were absent on the day that the survey was administered.

TRENDS

Trend comparisons can provide extremely useful information on whether certain behaviors have improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time. In fact, it is best to repeat a survey such as this at regular intervals in order to track changes over time. Because a similar survey of Somerville middle school students was administered in 2003, it is possible to make comparisons to results from that survey when items are comparable.

COMPARATIVE DATA

A limitation of such data is that it is difficult to compare results from Somerville to results from other communities. Making comparisons to other communities is quite complicated – surveys are not exactly alike, the populations used may differ in unknown ways, the timing of the

surveys may vary, and so on. Although it is natural to want to compare to other communities, a great deal can be learned simply by looking at Somerville data. The most useful comparisons are made by looking at Somerville over time.

When surveying high school students in grades nine through 12, limited comparisons can be made to Massachusetts as a whole since the Massachusetts Department of Education administers the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* to a sample of Massachusetts students every two years. Massachusetts does not, however, administer a statewide survey of middle school students and there are few other large-scale surveys of middle school students.

The *Monitoring the Future Survey* (MTF), administered annually each Spring by the University of Michigan for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, does include selected comparable items related to 8th grade substance use (the survey is not administered to students in grades 6 or 7). When possible, substance use results for Somerville 8th graders will be compared to national 8th grade results using the most recent available MTF data. The most current data are from the 2004 MTF which was administered in the Spring of 2004. It is important to note that this survey was administered one year prior to the Somerville survey.

WHO HAS THE PROBLEM?

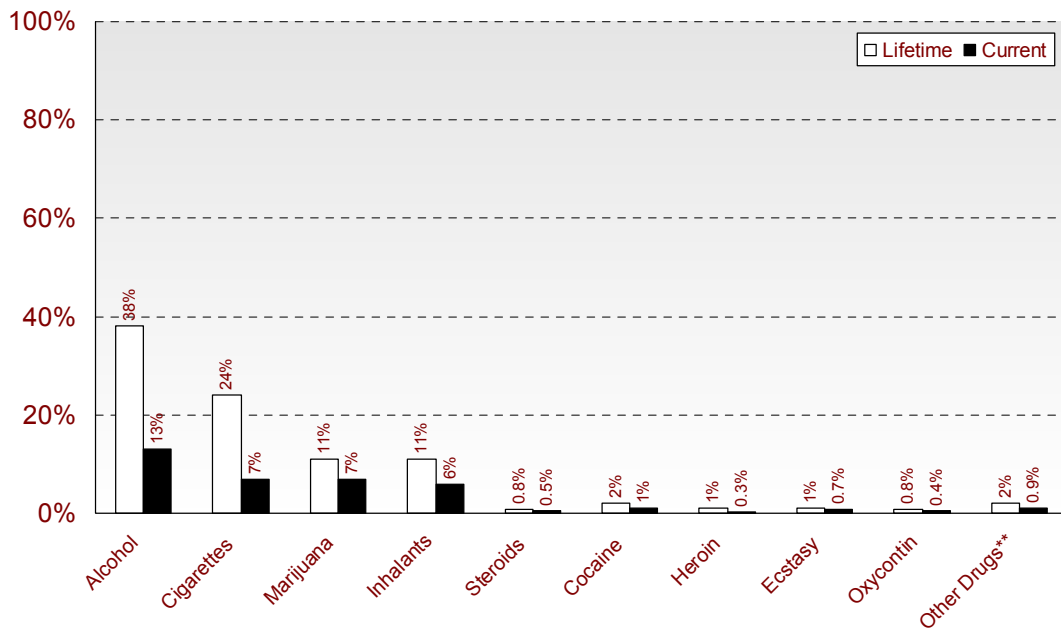
Although this survey was administered to middle school students, this does not mean that the problems addressed are confined solely to youth. For example, national studies of substance use show that rates of use are higher among young adults than adolescents. It is also important to keep in mind that while this survey focuses on a number of risky behaviors, it may not fully address the many positive aspects of adolescent life.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Data on health behavior among youth is typically collected in public schools because it is comparatively simple to collect data from what is essentially a "captive" audience. The fact that data on youth are collected in schools, however, does not mean that the schools bear the sole or even the largest responsibility for the risky behaviors revealed in these surveys. Issues such as those addressed in this survey are not school problems; they are community problems that require the attention of all community members and organizations.

Substance Use

Lifetime* and Current* Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005)



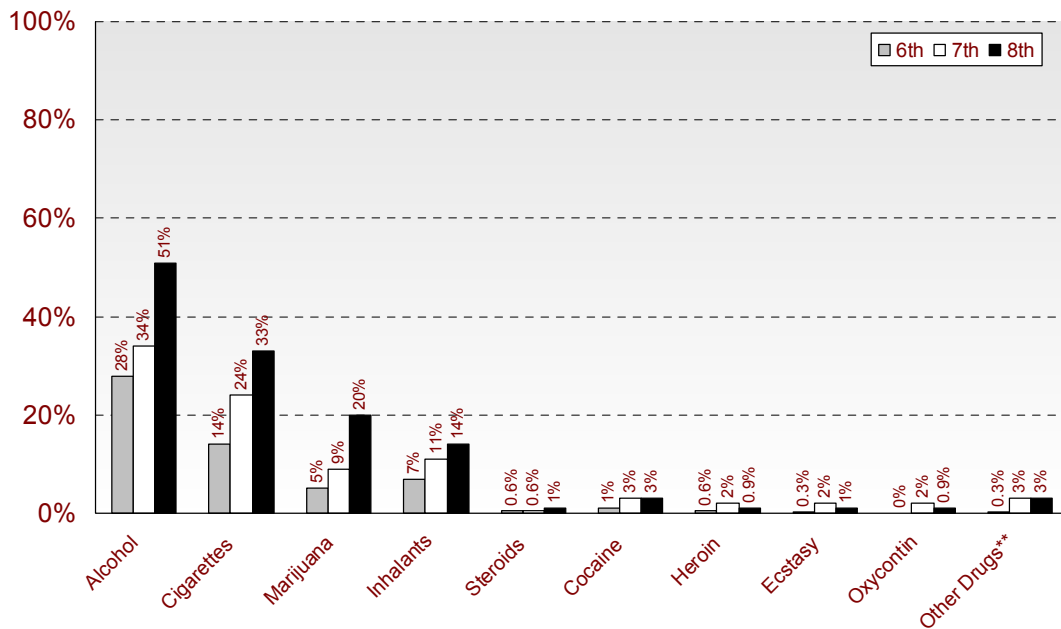
* Lifetime use is any use in one's lifetime. Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

** Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

SELECTED POINTS

- Lifetime use is any use in one's lifetime. Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- The questions concerning alcohol use were preceded by the following instruction: "The next questions ask about drinking alcohol. This includes drinking beer, wine, wine coolers and alcohol such as rum, gin, vodka or whiskey. For these questions, drinking alcohol does *not* include drinking sips of wine for religious purposes."
- Alcohol is the substance of choice, with 38% of 2005 Somerville middle school students reporting that they had consumed alcohol in their lifetime and 13% reporting that they had consumed it in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Approximately one of every four students (24%) reported ever using cigarettes and one in ten (11%) had used marijuana and inhalants.
- Both lifetime and current use of substances other than alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and inhalants was comparatively low.

Lifetime* Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Grade



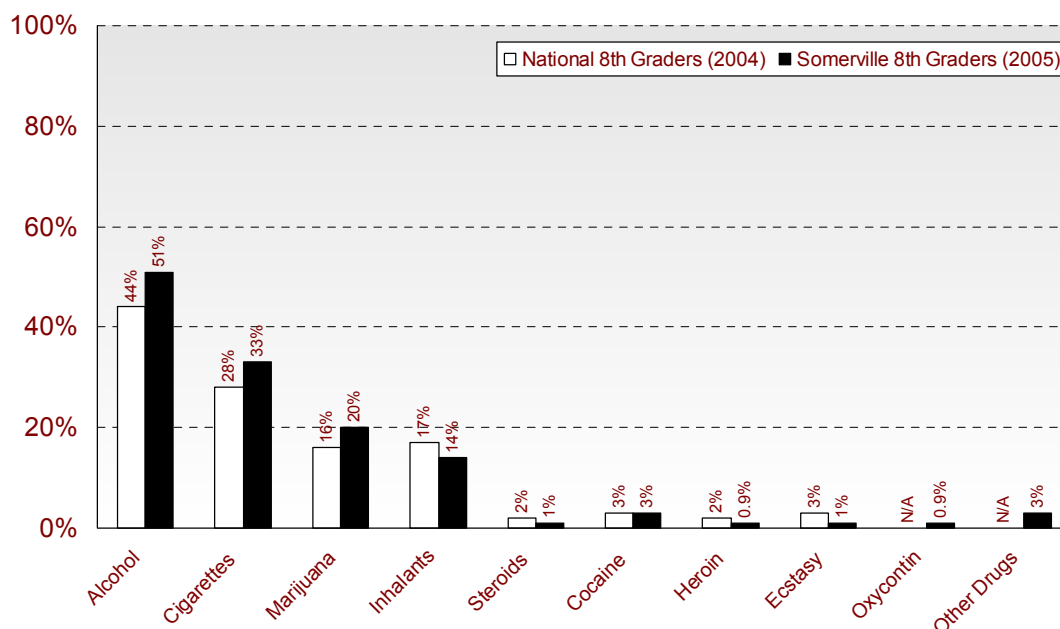
* Lifetime use is any use in one's lifetime.

** Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

SELECTED POINTS

- Overall, the percentage of 2005 Somerville middle school students who reported ever using each of these substances increased with age/grade. For example, the percentage who reported ever using alcohol in their lifetime increased from 28% in 6th grade to 34% in 7th grade and 51% in 8th grade.
- By spring of their 8th grade year, over half of Somerville middle school students (51%) reported that they had ever tried alcohol, approximately one-third (33%) had tried cigarettes, one-fifth (20%) had tried marijuana, and 14% had tried inhalants.

Lifetime* Substance Use for National 8th Grade Students (2004)** and Somerville 8th Grade Students (2005)



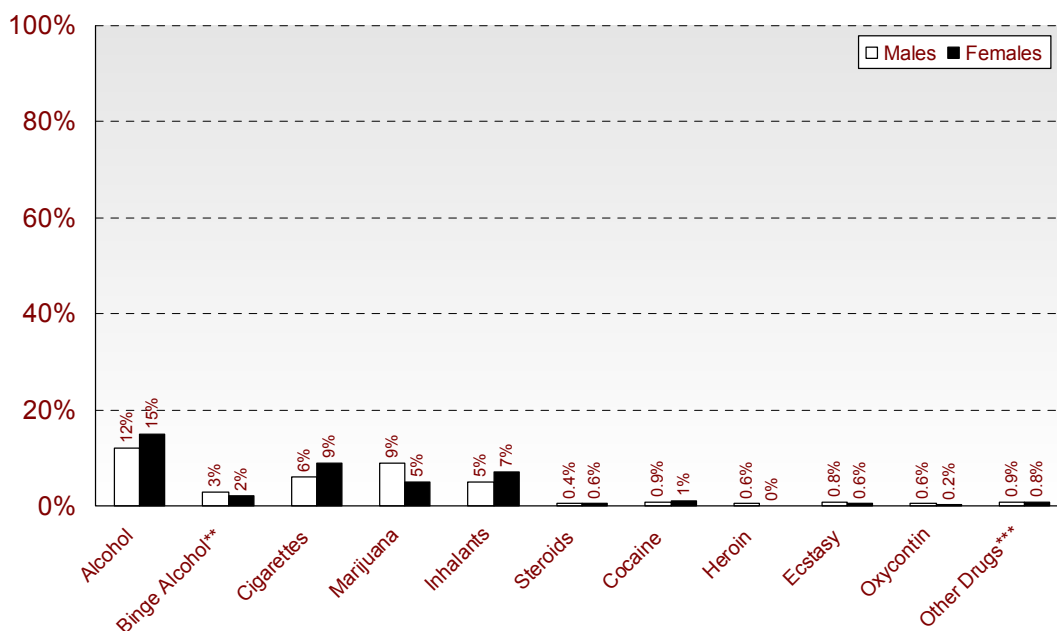
* Lifetime use is any use in one's lifetime.

** National 8th grade data from the 2004 Monitoring the Future Survey, National Institute on Drug Abuse.

SELECTED POINTS

- Comparative middle school data displayed here and elsewhere in this summary are from the 2004 *Monitoring the Future Survey*, conducted by the University of Michigan for the National Institute on Drug Abuse.
- Because the *Monitoring the Future Survey* is conducted with students in grades 8, 10, and 12, comparative data are limited to 8th grade students.
- Rates of 8th grade lifetime use of alcohol (51% Somerville, 44% National), cigarettes (33% Somerville, 28% National), and marijuana (20% Somerville, 16% National) were *higher* than the national average in Somerville.
- The rate of lifetime cocaine use was *the same* (3%) in Somerville and nationally.
- Rates of 8th grade lifetime use of inhalants (14% Somerville, 17% National), steroids (1% Somerville, 2% National), heroin (0.9% Somerville, 2% National), and ecstasy (1% Somerville, 3% National) were *lower* than the national average in Somerville.
- National data for oxycontin and other illegal drugs are not available.

Current* Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Gender



* Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

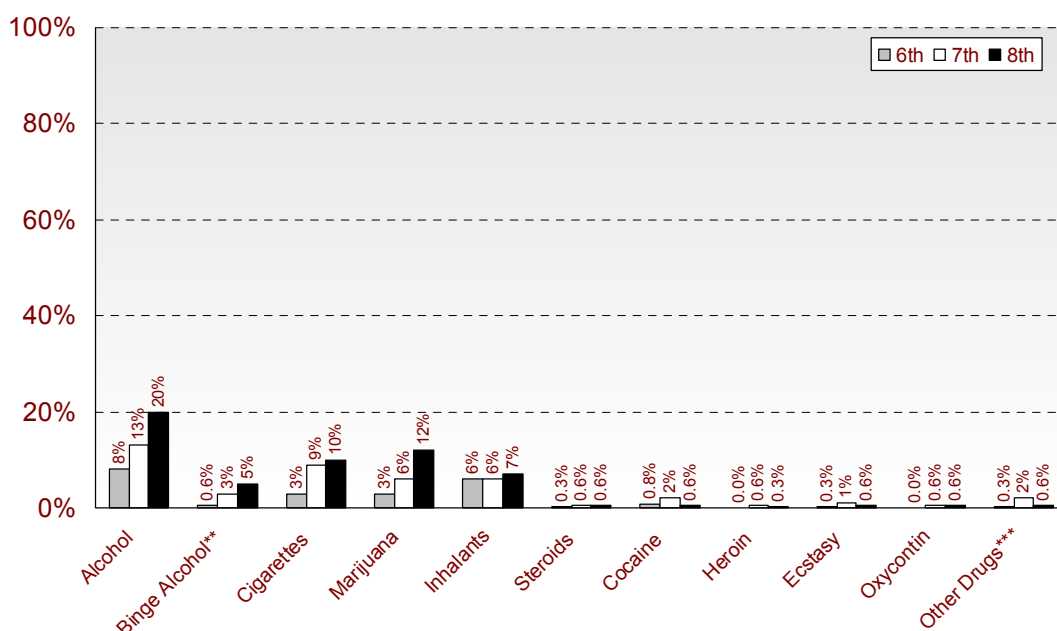
** Binge alcohol use was defined in the survey as having "five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours."

*** Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

SELECTED POINTS

- Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Binge alcohol use was defined in the survey as having "five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours."
- Overall, Somerville middle school males and females reported somewhat similar rates of current substance use.
- Males were, however, more likely to report current use of marijuana (9% males, 5% females) and binge alcohol use (3% males, 2% females).
- Females were more likely to report current use of alcohol (12% males, 15% females), cigarettes (6% males, 9% females), and inhalants (5% males, 7% females).
- Rates of use of other substances were similar among both populations.

Current* Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2005), by Grade



* Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

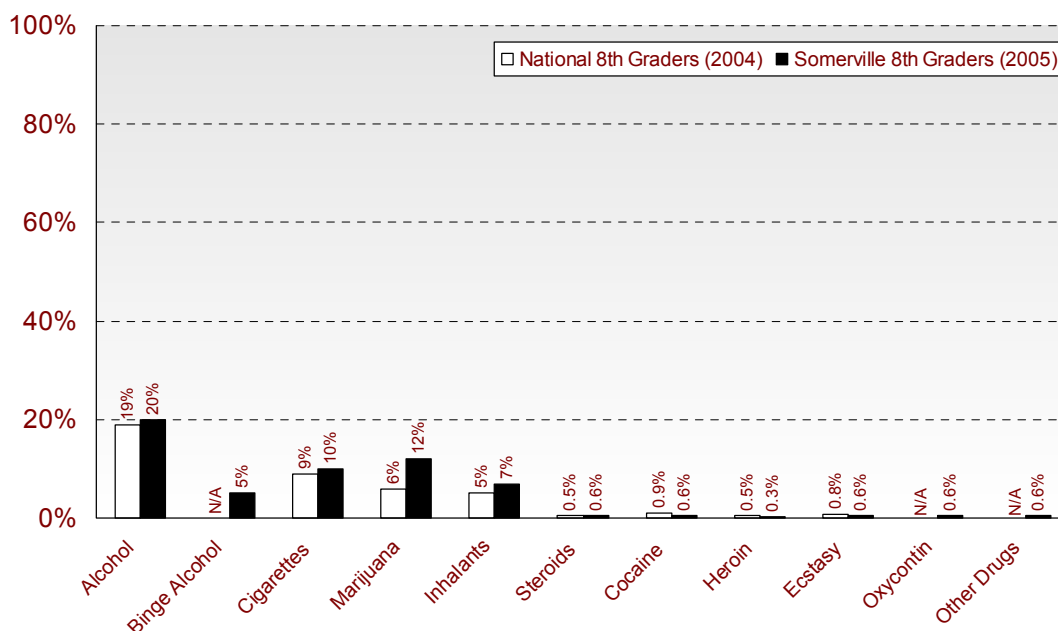
** Binge alcohol use was defined in the survey as having "five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours."

*** Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

SELECTED POINTS

- Overall, the percentage of Somerville middle school students who reported current use of more common substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana increased with age/grade. For example, the percentage of students who reported current marijuana use increased from 3% in 6th grade, to 6% in 7th grade, and 12% in 8th grade. The exception was inhalant use which remained steady from grade 6 through 8.
- Use rates for other substances remained quite low across all grades.

Current* Substance Use for National 8th Grade Students (2004)** and Somerville 8th Grade Students (2005)



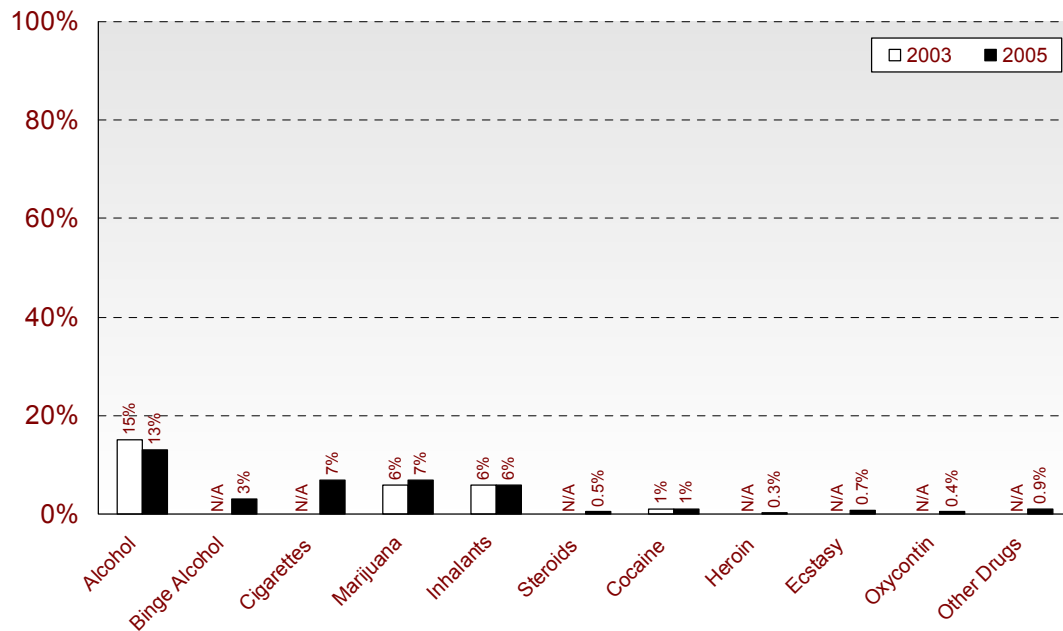
* Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

** National 8th grade data from the 2004 Monitoring the Future Survey, National Institute of Drug Abuse.

SELECTED POINTS

- Somerville 8th grade current use rates for comparable substances were at or above national averages.
- In particular, the rate of current marijuana use in Somerville (12%) was twice the national 8th grade rate (6%).
- Rates for other common substances were also slightly above national averages – alcohol (20% Somerville, 19% National), cigarettes (10% Somerville, 9% National), inhalants (7% Somerville, 5% National).
- Use rates for less commonly used substances were similar among both populations.

Current* Substance Use for Somerville Middle School Students (2003, 2005)



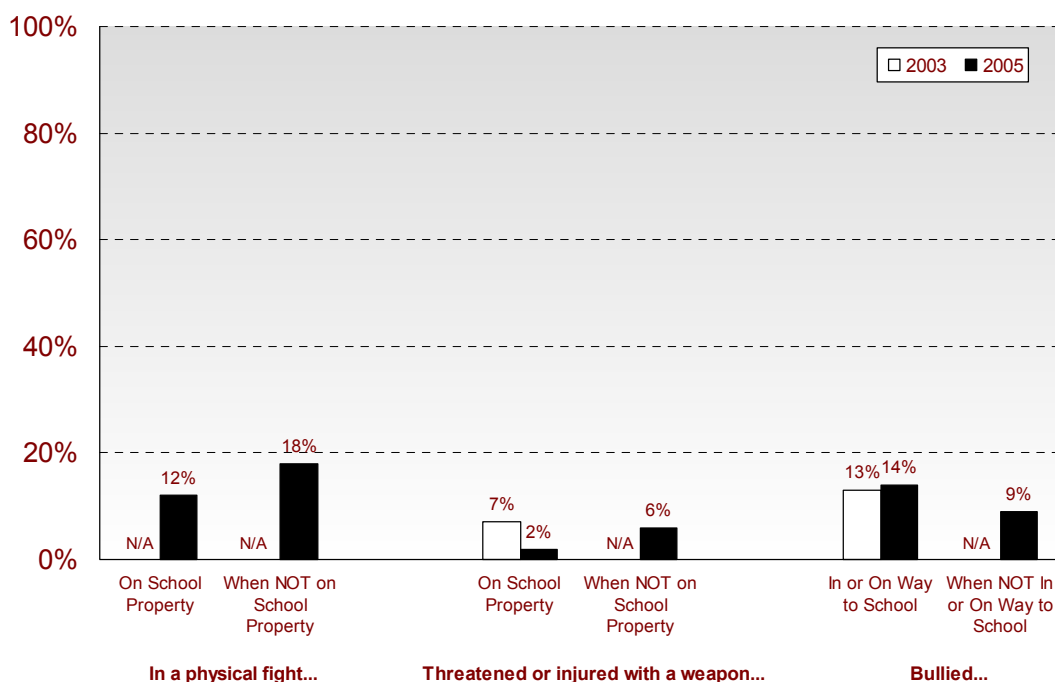
* Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

SELECTED POINTS

- Trend data from 2003 are not available for the following substances: binge alcohol, cigarettes, steroids, heroin, ecstasy, oxycontin, and other drugs.
- Available trend data reveal slight changes between 2003 and 2005 in current substance use. Rates of current use of inhalants and cocaine remained unchanged.
- The rate of current alcohol use decreased from 15% to 13%, while the rate of current marijuana use increased slightly from 6% to 7%.

Violence and Safety

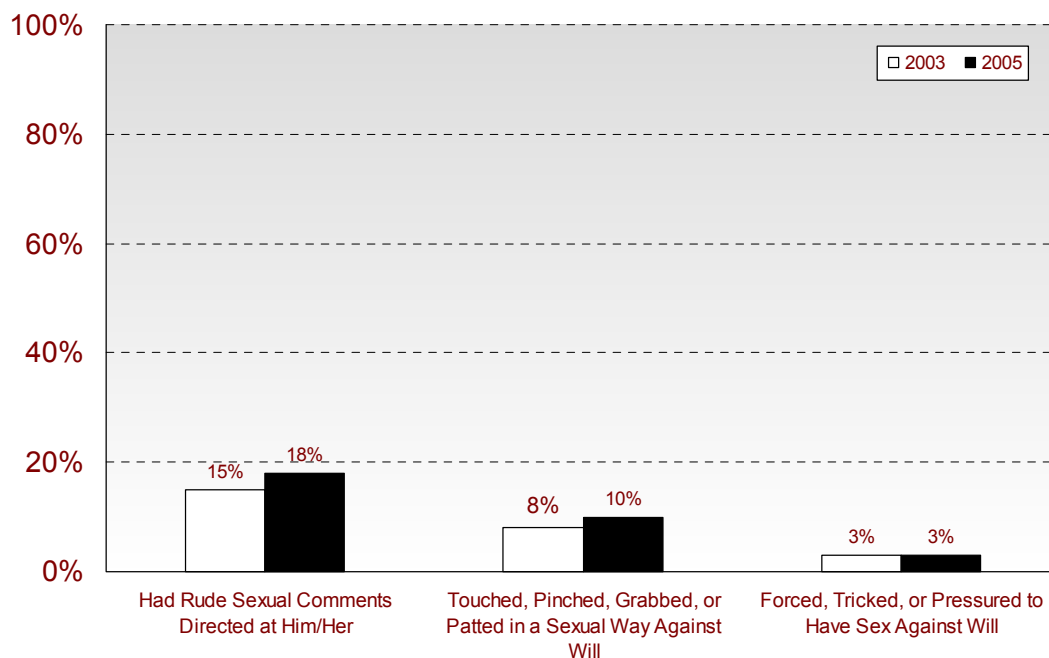
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Experienced Physical Violence Issues in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- 2005 Somerville middle school students were more likely to report that fighting and being threatened/injured with a weapon happened when they were *off* rather than *on* school property. Being bullied, however, happened more often *on* school property.
- **Trends:** Available trend data reveal a large decrease between 2003 and 2005 in the percentage of Somerville middle school students who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon *on* school property in the 12 months prior to the survey (7% to 2%). Reports of being bullied *on* school property during that time period remained fairly consistent (13% to 14%). Trend data for other items are not available.
- **Gender:** 2005 Somerville male middle school students were more likely than females to report physical fighting *on* school property (17% males, 8% females), physical fighting *off* school property (23%, 12%), and being threatened/injured with a weapon *off* school property (7%, 5%). Males and females, however, were equally likely to report being threatened/injured with a weapon *on* school property (2% each), and being bullied when both *on* (14%, 15%) and *off* school property (9% each).
- **Grade:** In general, issues that occurred *on* school property decreased between grades 6 and 8, and issues that occurred *off* school property showed little change. The exception was being threatened/injured with a weapon *off* school property which increased from 3% in 6th grade to 7% in 8th grade. Sixth to 8th grade data are as follows: fought *on* school property (16% to 11%), fought *off* school property (18% to 18%), threatened/injured *on* school property (3% to 2%), threatened/injured *off* school property (3% to 7%), bullied *on* school property (17% to 11%), bullied *off* school property (9% to 9%).

Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Experienced Sexual Violence Issues in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)

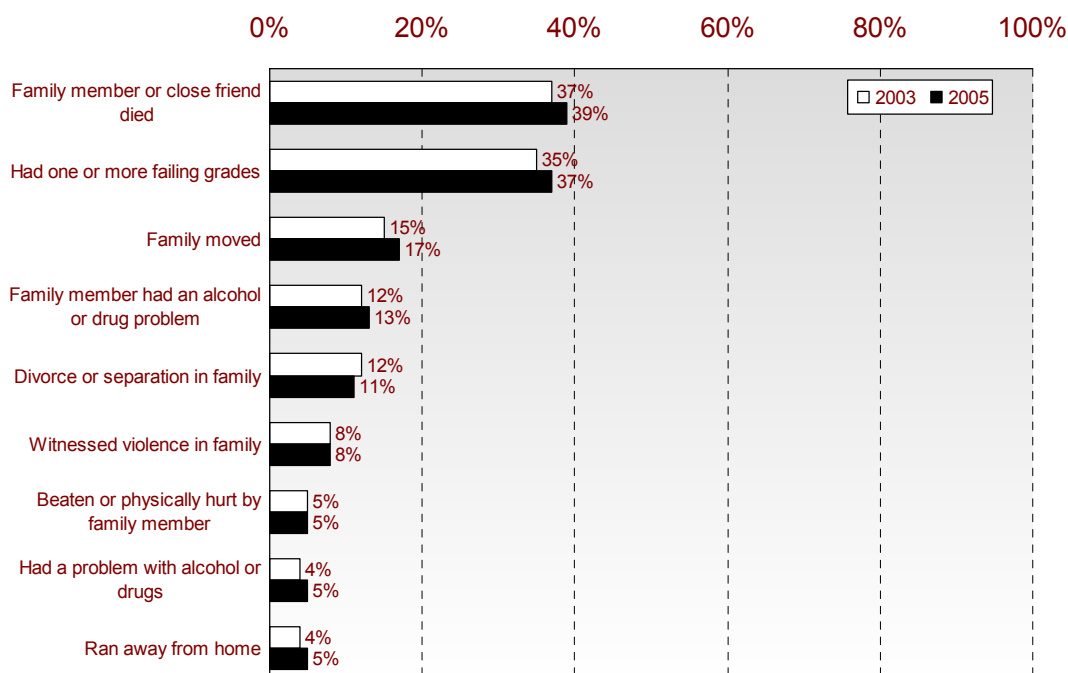


SELECTED POINTS

- In 2005, 18% of Somerville middle school students reported that they had rude sexual comments directed at them in the 12 months prior to the survey, 10% had been touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against their will, and 3% were forced, tricked, or pressured to have sex.
- **Trends:** There was an increase between 2003 and 2005 in the percentage of Somerville middle school students who had rude sexual comments directed at them (15% to 18%) and who were touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against their will (8% to 10%) in the 12 months prior to the survey. There was no change in the percentage who were forced, tricked, or pressured to have sex against their will.
- **Gender:** Female 2005 Somerville middle school students were more likely than males to report having rude sexual comments directed at them (10% males, 26% females), being touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against their will (6%, 15%), and forced to have sex (3%, 4%).
- **Grade:** The percentage of 2005 respondents who reported each of these experiences increased with age grade between 6th and 8th grade: had rude sexual comments directed at them (13%, 20%, 21%), touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against their will (8%, 11%, 12%), forced, tricked, or pressured to have sex against their will (2%, 3%, 4%).

Mental Health

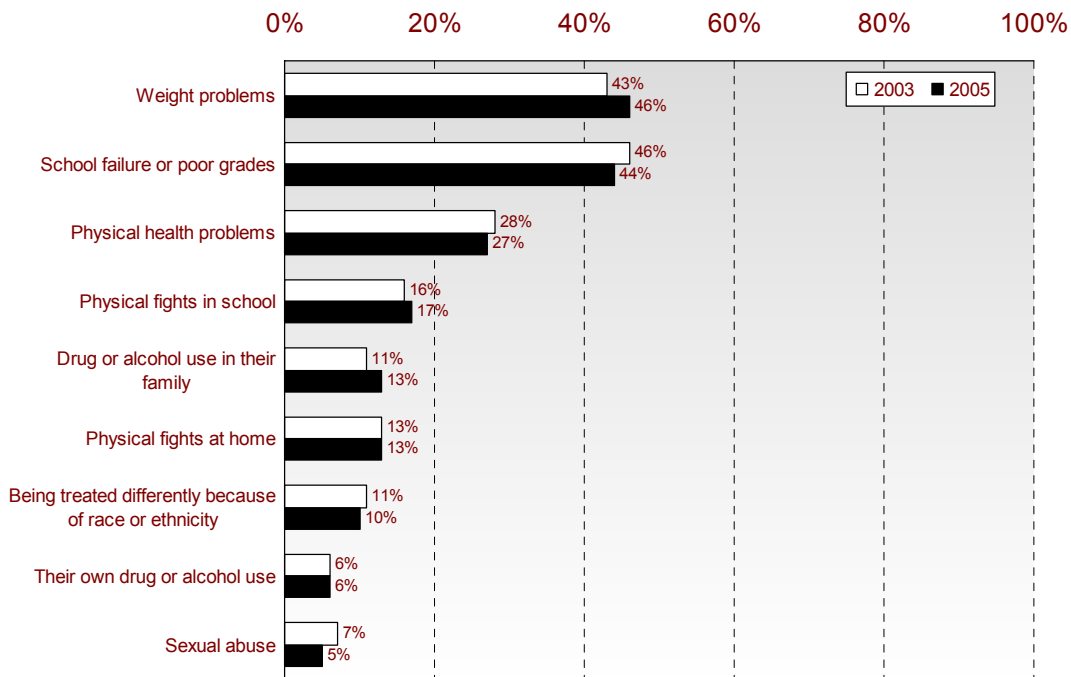
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Reported Experiencing Potential Stressors in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- In 2005, roughly four out of every 10 Somerville middle school students had a family member or close friend die (39%) or had one or more failing grades (37%) in the 12 months prior to the survey. Almost two of 10 had moved with their family (17%), over one in 10 had a family member with an alcohol or drug problem (13%) or had experienced a divorce or separation in their family (11%). Less than one in 10 had witnessed violence in their family (8%), was beaten or physically hurt by a family member (5%), had a problem with alcohol or drugs (5%), or ran away from home (5%).
- **Trends:** As the chart displays, there were only slight changes between 2003 and 2005 in these experiences, most of which were increases.
- **Gender:** Overall, female 2005 Somerville middle school students were slightly more likely than males to report experiencing these issues. The exceptions on which males were more likely than females to report were having one or more failing grades (43% males, 31% females) and having a problem with alcohol or drugs (6% males, 4% females).
- **Grade:** On the whole, most of these experiences varied inconsistently with age/grade. However, four increased consistently between grades 6 and 8: had a family member with an alcohol or drug problem (11%, 14%, 16%), witnessed violence in family (6%, 9%, 10%), ran away from home (2%, 5%, 9%), and had a problem with alcohol or drugs (2%, 5%, 8%).

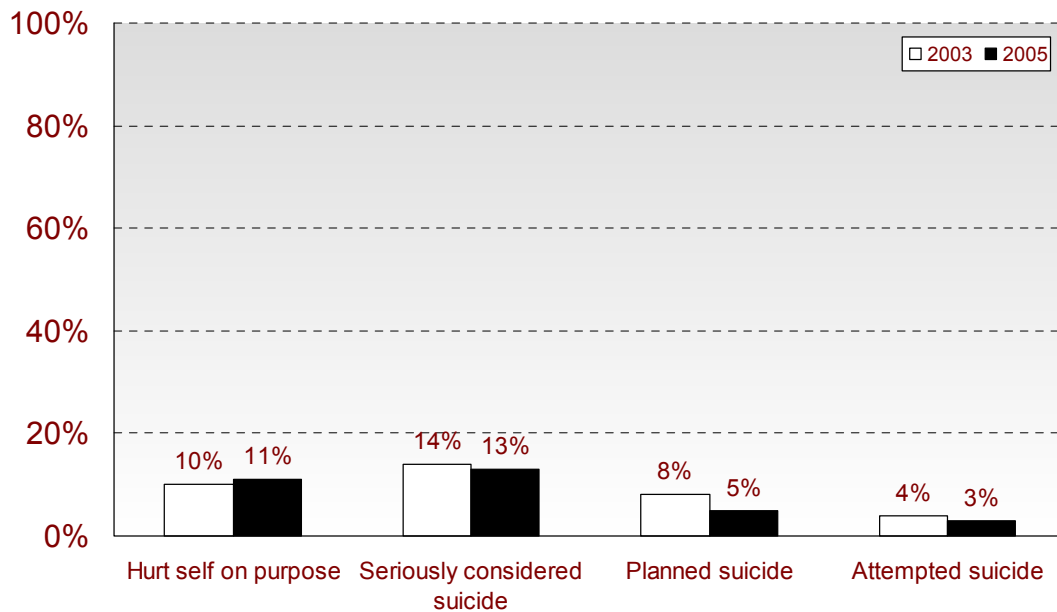
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Reported Worrying About Problems in the Past 12 Months (2003, 2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- The issue that the largest percentage of Somerville middle school students reported worrying about in 2005 was weight problems (46% reported worrying about this in the 12 months prior to the survey), followed closely by school failure or poor grades (44%).
- **Trends:** As the chart displays, there were only slight changes between 2003 and 2005 in the percentage of students who reported worrying about these issues.
- **Gender:** Overall, female 2005 Somerville middle school students were more likely than males to report worrying about these issues, particularly weight problems (33% males, 59% females) and sexual abuse (2% males, 9% females). An exception was the percentage of students who worried about physical fight in school (20% males, 14% females).
- **Grade:** On the whole, the percentage of students who reported worrying about these issues varied inconsistently with age/grade. Exceptions include those who worried about physical health problems which increased from grade 6 through 8 (23%, 26%, 31%) and those who worried about physical fights in school which decreased (21%, 18%, 12%). Interestingly, the percentage who reported worrying about school failure or poor grades spiked in 7th grade (39%, 51%, 43%).

Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation and Behavior in the Past 12 Months Among Somerville Middle School Students (2003, 2005)

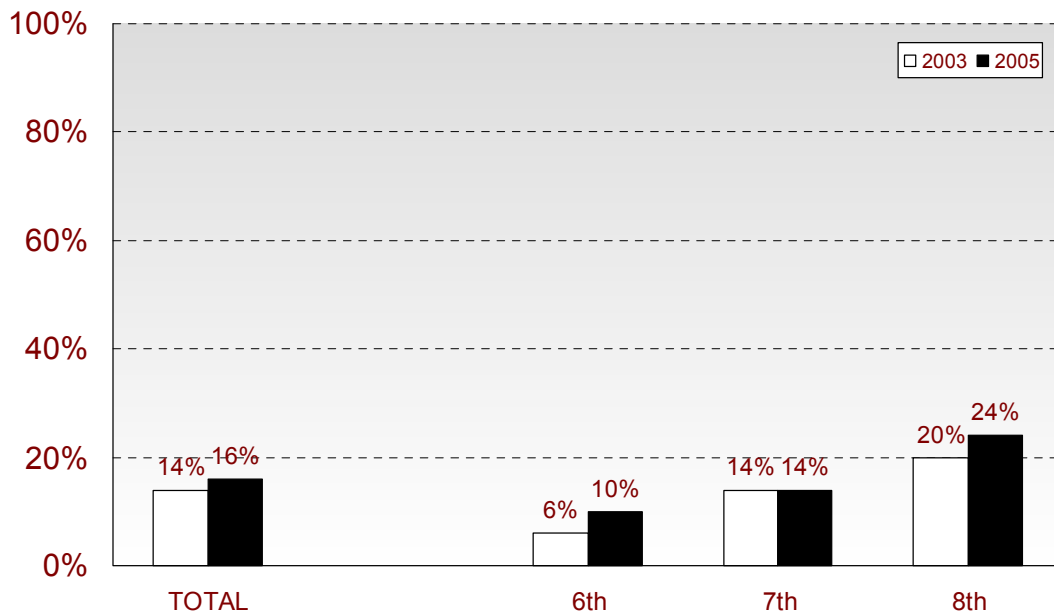


SELECTED POINTS

- Eleven percent (11%) of 2005 Somerville middle school students reported that they *hurt themselves on purpose* in the 12 months prior to the survey. Thirteen percent (13%) reported *seriously considering* suicide, 5% *made a plan* to commit suicide, and 3% *actually attempted* suicide in that time.
- **Trends:** With the possible exception of the percentage who *planned* suicide, which decreased from 8% to 5%, there was little change in self-harm (10% to 11%) and suicidal ideation (14% to 13%) and behavior (4% to 3%) between 2003 and 2005.
- **Gender:** In 2005, Somerville middle school females were more likely than males to have *hurt themselves on purpose* (7% males, 16% females), *seriously considered* suicide (9%, 17%), *made a plan to commit* suicide (3%, 8%), and *actually attempted* suicide (2%, 4%) in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- **Grade:** Rates of each of these issues increased between grades 6 and 8: *hurt self on purpose* (10%, 12%, 12%), *seriously considered* suicide (10%, 13%, 16%), *made a plan to commit* suicide (4%, 6%, 7%), *actually attempted* suicide (2%, 3%, 4%).

Physical Health

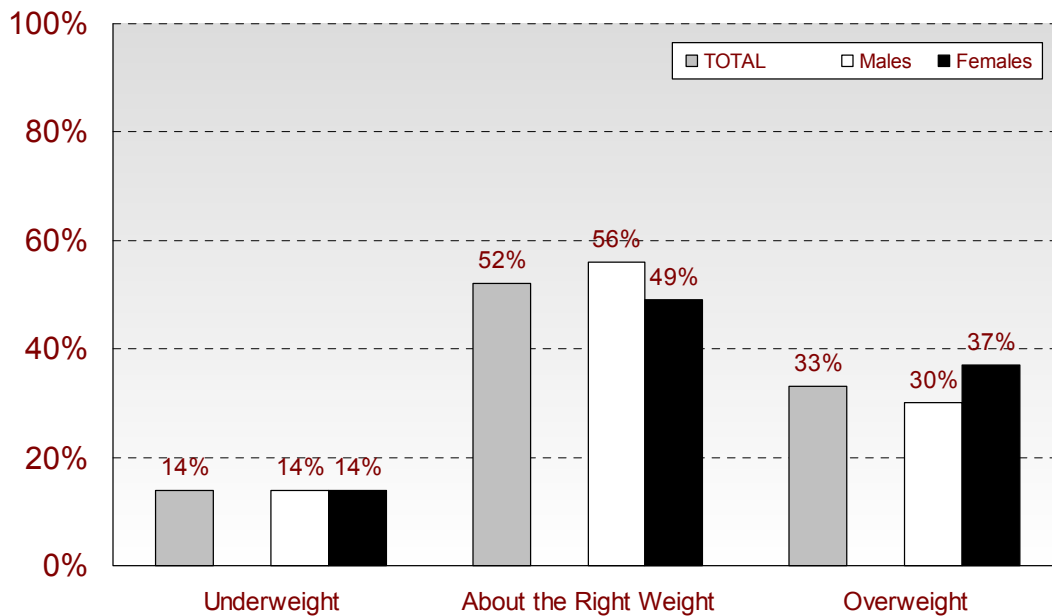
Percent of Somerville Middle School Students Who Have Ever Had Sexual Intercourse, Total and by Grade (2003, 2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- Sixteen percent (16%) of 2005 Somerville middle school students reported ever having sexual intercourse – 10% of 6th graders, 14% of 7th graders, and 24% of 8th graders.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville middle school students who reported ever having sexual intercourse increased slightly between 2003 (14%) and 2005 (16%). This increase was evident in both grades 6 (6% to 10%) and 8 (20% to 24%).
- **Gender:** 2005 Somerville middle school males (20%) were more likely than females (12%) to report ever having sexual intercourse.
- **Grade:** As displayed in the chart, the percentage of 2005 Somerville middle school students who reported ever having sexual intercourse increased from 10% in 6th grade to 14% in 7th grade and 24% in 8th grade.

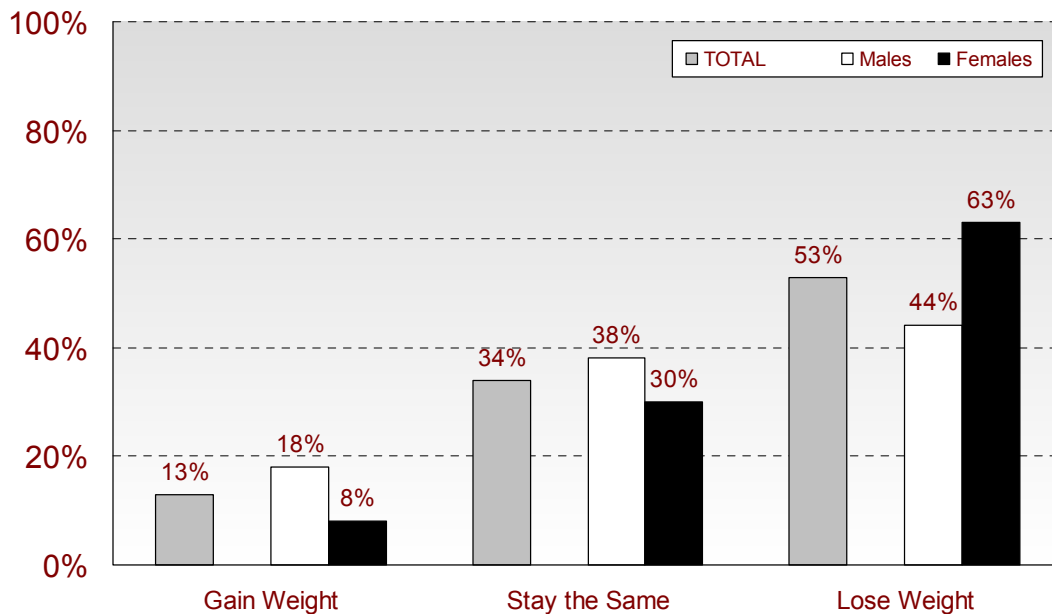
Perception of Body Weight Among Somerville Middle School Students, Total and by Gender (2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- Fourteen percent (14%) of 2005 Somerville middle school students described themselves as *underweight*, 52% as *about the right weight*, and 33% as *overweight*.
- Fourteen percent (14%) of both males and females described themselves as *underweight*, 56% of males and 49% of females as *about the right weight*, and 30% of males and 37% of females as *overweight*.
- **Trends:** Trend data from 2003 are not available.
- **Gender:** As displayed in the chart, female Somerville middle school students were more likely to describe themselves as *overweight* (30% males, 37% females), males were more likely to describe themselves as *about the right weight* (56% males, 49% females), and both were equally likely to describe themselves as *underweight* (14% each).
- **Grade:** There was little difference in weight perception by age/grade: *underweight* (15%, 14%, 13%), *about the right weight* (52%, 51%, 55%), *overweight* (33%, 35%, 32%).

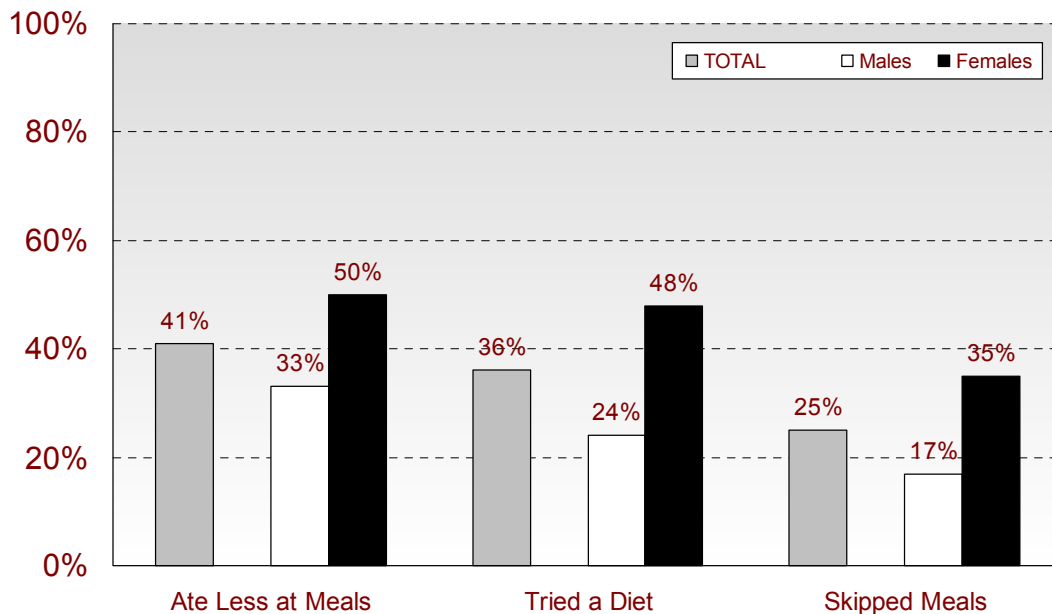
Current Weight Control Goal Among Somerville Middle School Students, Total and by Gender (2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- Thirteen percent (13%) of 2005 Somerville middle school students reported that they were trying to *gain weight*, 34% that they were trying to *stay the same weight*, and 53% that they were trying to *lose weight*.
- **Trends:** Trend data from 2003 are not available.
- **Gender:** Female students were much more likely to report trying to *lose weight* (44% males, 63% females) while males were much more likely to report trying to *gain weight* (18% males, 8% females) or *stay the same weight* (38% males, 30% females).
- **Grade:** The percentage of students trying to *gain weight* and *stay the same weight* increased from grade 6 to 8, and the percentage trying to *lose weight* decreased: *gain weight* (11%, 14%, 15%), *stay the same weight* (33%, 34%, 35%), *lose weight* (56%, 52%, 51%).

Weight Loss Methods Used by Somerville Middle School Students in the Past 12 Months, Total and by Gender (2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- Forty-one percent (41%) of 2005 Somerville middle school students reported that they had *eaten less at meals* in the 12 months prior to the survey in order to lose weight. Thirty-six percent (36%) had *tried a diet* to do so and 25% had *skipped meals*.
- Fifty percent (50%) of Somerville middle school females reported that they had *eaten less at meals* to lose weight compared to 33% of males, 48% had *tried a diet* compared to 24% of males, and 35% had *skipped meals* compared to 17% of males.
- Trends:** Trend data from 2003 are not available.
- Gender:** Female middle school students were much more likely than males to report using each of these weight loss methods.
- Grade:** Differences in methods used by age/grade among Somerville middle school students were inconsistent: *ate less at meals* (40%, 41%, 42%), *tried a diet* (39%, 37%, 31%), *skipped meals* (23%, 29%, 25%).

Appendix A:

Selected Data Tables

2004-2005 SOMERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use

	TOTAL		GENDER		GRADE			MTF ¹
	2003 (1098)	2005 (1036)	Males (534)	Females (501)	6 th (355)	7 th (325)	8 th (353)	8 th
LIFETIME USE (use in lifetime)								
Cigarettes	N/A	23.6%	22.8%	24.4%	13.6%	24.3%	33.0%	27.9%
Alcohol (other than a few sips)	30.1%	37.6%	39.2%	35.9%	27.5%	34.0%	50.9%	43.9%
Binge Alcohol	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marijuana	N/A	11.3%	13.2%	9.2%	4.8%	9.0%	20.0%	16.3%
Inhalants	N/A	10.9%	9.9%	11.9%	7.4%	10.9%	14.4%	17.3%
Steroids (without a prescription)	3.9%	0.8%	0.6%	1.0%	0.6%	0.6%	1.1%	1.9%
Cocaine	N/A	2.1%	2.6%	1.6%	1.1%	2.8%	2.6%	3.4%
Heroin	N/A	1.0%	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.6%	0.9%	1.6%
Ecstasy	N/A	1.2%	1.3%	1.0%	0.3%	2.2%	1.1%	2.8%
Oxycontin	N/A	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	1.6%	0.9%	N/A
Other Illegal Drugs ²	N/A	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	0.3%	2.8%	2.9%	N/A
CURRENT USE (use in past 30 days)								
Cigarettes	N/A	7.3%	5.9%	8.8%	2.8%	9.0%	10.2%	9.2%
Alcohol	15.2%	13.4%	12.4%	14.5%	7.7%	13.0%	19.7%	18.6%
Binge Alcohol	N/A	2.7%	3.0%	2.4%	0.6%	2.8%	4.9%	N/A
Marijuana	6.2%	7.1%	8.6%	5.4%	3.1%	6.2%	12.0%	6.4%
Inhalants	6.3%	6.1%	4.9%	7.4%	5.6%	6.2%	6.6%	4.5%
Steroids (without a prescription)	N/A	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%
Cocaine	1.2%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.5%	0.6%	0.9%
Heroin	N/A	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%
Ecstasy	N/A	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	1.2%	0.6%	0.8%
Oxycontin	N/A	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	N/A
Other Illegal Drugs ²	N/A	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.3%	1.9%	0.6%	N/A
Attended class within one hour of using alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs (in the past 30 days)	N/A	3.3%	3.4%	3.1%	2.0%	2.5%	5.2%	N/A

¹ Data from the 2004 *Monitoring the Future* Survey administered by the University of Michigan for the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

² Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

2004-2005 SOMERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

Substance Use-Related Issues

	TOTAL		GENDER		GRADE		
	2003	2005	Males	Females	6 th	7 th	8 th
	(1098)	(1036)	(534)	(501)	(355)	(325)	(353)
PERCEPTION OF FRIENDS' DISAPPROVAL - Percent who indicated that their <i>friends</i> would think it "Wrong" or "Very Wrong" for them to...							
Smoke cigarettes	N/A	83.5%	83.7%	83.3%	91.4%	82.8%	76.2%
Drink beer, wine, or hard liquor regularly	N/A	74.3%	73.4%	75.2%	85.8%	75.9%	61.0%
Smoke marijuana	N/A	86.4%	84.0%	89.0%	95.4%	85.6%	78.1%
Use illegal drugs other than marijuana	N/A	92.9%	91.8%	94.1%	98.0%	90.3%	90.2%
PERCEPTION OF PARENTS' DISAPPROVAL - Percent who indicated that their <i>parents</i> would think it "Wrong" or "Very Wrong" for them to...							
Smoke cigarettes	N/A	97.4%	97.3%	97.4%	98.3%	98.1%	95.7%
Drink beer, wine, or hard liquor regularly	N/A	93.1%	92.8%	93.3%	94.3%	96.0%	89.1%
Smoke marijuana	N/A	98.0%	97.8%	98.4%	98.8%	98.8%	96.5%
Use illegal drugs other than marijuana	N/A	98.7%	98.3%	99.0%	99.1%	98.5%	98.2%
EXPOSURE TO SUBSTANCE USE AT HOME – Percent who live with someone who...							
Smokes cigarettes, cigars, or a pipe	45.0%	40.3%	37.1%	43.6%	39.5%	36.8%	44.3%
They think drinks too much alcohol	N/A	13.1%	11.7%	14.7%	10.2%	14.4%	14.9%
Smokes marijuana	N/A	6.6%	5.0%	8.4%	1.5%	7.2%	11.3%
Uses illegal drugs other than marijuana	N/A	3.4%	1.9%	4.9%	1.2%	4.1%	4.9%
EVER RECEIVED INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOL ON...							
The risks involved with smoking and other tobacco use	71.4%	79.3%	77.4%	81.3%	79.0%	77.0%	81.8%
The risks involved with drug use	75.9%	75.1%	73.3%	77.1%	71.4%	75.8%	78.3%
Handling peer pressure, including pressure to smoke, drink, or take drugs	69.8%	68.1%	66.4%	69.8%	66.9%	66.0%	71.4%
EVER TALKED WITH PARENTS OR OTHER FAMILY ADULTS ABOUT...							
The risks involved with smoking or other tobacco use	57.6%	60.7%	60.1%	61.2%	61.7%	60.4%	59.8%
The risks involved with drug use	54.1%	61.3%	62.1%	60.7%	62.4%	60.5%	61.0%

2004-2005 SOMERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

Violence and Safety

	TOTAL		GENDER		GRADE		
	2003	2005	Males	Females	6 th	7 th	8 th
	(1098)	(1036)	(534)	(501)	(355)	(325)	(353)
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE EXPERIENCES (past 12 months)							
In a physical fight – on school property	N/A	12.4%	17.0%	7.5%	15.9%	9.8%	11.2%
In a physical fight – when NOT on school property	N/A	17.8%	23.0%	12.4%	18.1%	17.7%	17.8%
Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property	6.8%	2.0%	2.1%	1.8%	2.6%	1.6%	1.7%
Threatened or injured with a weapon when NOT on school property	N/A	6.0%	7.1%	4.9%	2.9%	7.9%	7.4%
Bullied, threatened, or pushed around in/on the way to school	13.2%	14.3%	13.5%	14.9%	16.6%	15.7%	10.9%
Bullied, threatened, or pushed around when NOT in/on the way to school	N/A	8.9%	8.7%	9.0%	9.0%	8.9%	8.9%
Beaten or physically hurt by someone in family	4.9%	5.1%	4.1%	6.1%	4.7%	5.7%	4.9%
Beaten or physically hurt by someone NOT a family member	3.8%	4.8%	5.4%	4.3%	5.5%	3.5%	5.5%
Witnessed violence in family	7.6%	8.3%	7.8%	9.0%	5.8%	9.2%	10.1%
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE (past 12 months)							
Had rude sexual comments directed at him/her	14.5%	17.8%	9.8%	26.0%	13.4%	19.6%	20.6%
Touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against will	8.1%	10.2%	5.8%	14.7%	7.9%	10.8%	12.1%
Forced, tricked, or pressured to have sex that he/she didn't want by a boyfriend, girlfriend, or some other person he/she knew	3.2%	3.1%	2.5%	3.7%	2.0%	2.9%	4.0%
WEAPONS CARRYING (past 30 days)							
Carried a weapon – on school property	N/A	3.0%	4.3%	1.6%	1.1%	3.7%	4.2%
Carried a weapon – when NOT on school property	N/A	8.4%	12.7%	4.0%	5.1%	8.7%	11.6%
SCHOOL SAFETY (past 30 days)							
Stayed home from school out of fear for safety	7.8%	6.8%	6.3%	7.5%	6.3%	7.8%	6.6%
EVER RECEIVED INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOL ON...							
How to resolve disputes without fighting	64.7%	65.3%	62.6%	68.0%	65.2%	67.7%	62.9%

2004-2005 SOMERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

Mental Health Issues

	TOTAL		GENDER		GRADE		
	2003	2005	Males	Females	6 th	7 th	8 th
	(1098)	(1036)	(534)	(501)	(355)	(325)	(353)
STRESSORS EXPERIENCED (past 12 months)							
Had one or more failing grades on a report card	34.8%	37.3%	43.0%	31.4%	33.5%	44.7%	34.1%
Had a problem with alcohol or drugs	3.8%	5.1%	5.9%	4.3%	1.8%	5.4%	8.2%
A family member had an alcohol or drug problem	11.7%	13.3%	11.2%	15.5%	10.7%	13.5%	15.7%
There was a divorce or separation in family	11.8%	11.3%	10.3%	12.5%	14.8%	9.3%	9.9%
Family moved	14.9%	16.8%	16.4%	17.2%	17.4%	16.9%	16.0%
Ran away from home	4.0%	5.4%	4.2%	6.8%	2.4%	4.8%	9.0%
Family member or close friend died	36.9%	38.9%	34.5%	43.6%	40.7%	40.5%	35.4%
WORRIED ABOUT PROBLEMS (past 12 months)							
Physical health problems	27.5%	26.6%	22.7%	30.7%	23.4%	25.5%	30.7%
Weight problems	43.2%	45.5%	32.6%	59.0%	45.8%	45.5%	44.9%
Sexual abuse	6.7%	5.2%	1.8%	8.9%	5.7%	3.9%	6.1%
School failure or poor grades	45.8%	44.3%	43.8%	44.8%	39.3%	50.8%	43.4%
Drug or alcohol use in your family	11.3%	12.6%	10.8%	14.4%	12.0%	12.8%	12.8%
Your own drug or alcohol use	5.7%	5.9%	6.1%	5.8%	3.3%	7.4%	7.2%
Physical fights at home	13.0%	13.0%	12.5%	13.6%	12.7%	15.2%	11.6%
Physical fights in school	15.7%	16.8%	19.9%	13.6%	21.0%	18.4%	11.5%
Being treated differently because of your race or ethnicity	10.5%	10.3%	9.0%	11.7%	8.5%	11.6%	11.0%
HURTING ONESELF AND SUICIDE (past 12 months)							
Hurt self on purpose	9.7%	11.2%	6.7%	15.9%	9.8%	12.4%	11.5%
Seriously considered suicide	14.2%	12.8%	8.7%	17.1%	10.0%	12.7%	15.7%
Made a plan to commit suicide	7.5%	5.4%	3.1%	7.8%	3.5%	6.0%	6.7%
Actually attempted suicide	3.7%	3.1%	1.9%	4.3%	2.0%	2.8%	4.3%
SOCIAL SUPPORTS							
Have at least one teacher or other school adult to talk to about a problem	N/A	60.4%	58.9%	62.0%	65.6%	59.8%	56.0%